

This Week In Congress

June 14, 2004

Dear Friend,

Welcome to "This Week in Congress." I hope you find this newsletter useful.

Celebrating the Life of President Ronald Reagan

Our country mourned the passing of our 40th president, Ronald Reagan, who died June 5 after a long battle with Alzheimer's disease. This past week, the body of the former president lay in state in Washington, D.C., with the streets and the Capitol filled with people who traveled many miles to pay their respects to a great leader and his loving wife and family.

In celebrating the life and service of President Reagan, I was privileged to attend his arrival ceremony at the Capitol on Wednesday and the funeral services at the National Cathedral on Friday. During the solemn ceremony, world leaders came to pay their respects and to honor a great man. President Reagan's love of freedom and embrace of optimism were virtues many of these leaders sought to cherish in their own countries.

While standing in the Capitol Rotunda and contemplating President Reagan's flag-draped casket, I thought of Reagan's love for America. His love of freedom guided him, and, by living his convictions, Reagan changed the world. I also offered comments in the House of Representatives, to pay tribute to an American who was steadfast in his appointed duty, thorough in thought, long on compassion and short on vanity.

There is sadness for the passing of President Reagan, but more importantly there is cause for celebrating his life, his accomplishments and his deeds. We honor President Reagan in the words he used to honor the crew of the Challenger Space Shuttle in 1986 - "we will never forget him, nor the last time we saw him, as he prepared for the journey, waved goodbye and slipped the surly bonds of earth to touch the face of God."

A full copy of the speech can be found at:

http://www.house.gov/apps/list/speech/ks01_moran/sp060904Reagan.html.

Meeting the New Iraqi President

On Thursday, I had the opportunity to meet with the new interim Iraqi President, Sheikh Ghazi al-Yawar, during a meeting on Capitol Hill. The president and I discussed the future of Iraq and the role that the Iraqis and Americans will play in ensuring that stability and democratic principles will prevail in the country.

During the hour-long meeting, President al-Yawar and I discussed the June 30 transfer of power from the U.S. led Coalition Provincial Government to the new Iraqi interim government. Current plans are for elections for a transition government by January 31, 2005, with votes on a permanent constitution by October 31, 2005, and for a permanent government by December 15, 2005.

During the meeting, President al-Yawar told me, "If we have to count the number of times the United States has moved to bring freedom to the people of the world - it is uncountable. I speak for the majority of Iraqis. They are your friends. They are appreciative."

If the United States is to succeed in Iraq, we must make certain that the Iraqis take control of their country and its future. Our troops have sacrificed to give Iraqis the opportunity for a stable and free country. Now it is up to the Iraqis to see that the goals of freedom and sovereignty are fulfilled.

President al-Yawar was in Washington, D.C. to meet with Members of Congress and to attend the funeral of President Ronald Reagan.

Working to Fully Funding Medicaid Services

I met with Kansas and federal Medicaid officials on Thursday to discuss hospital reimbursements and mental health services for children in foster care. At issue is the concern that federal Medicaid reimbursements are not meeting the costs of services in Kansas. As I continue to try to alleviate this concern, I will work with my counterparts at the state and federal level to ensure that Kansas receives its share of funding to treat Medicaid patients.

Participating in the meeting were officials from the Kansas Governor's Office, including the secretary of the Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, Janet Schalansky, and representatives from the state legislature and the University of Kansas Hospital. The director of the Center for Medicaid and State Operations, Dennis Smith, and other representatives from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services were also at the meeting.

Speaking to the Kansas State Veterans of Foreign Wars Convention

I was honored to speak at this year's Kansas Veterans of Foreign Wars and Ladies Auxiliary Convention in Wichita. During the annual meeting, members elected and installed new officers and discussed ways to promote and improve their civic and patriotic programs. At the convention, I spoke about how our country is fortunate to have an abundance of men and women who are willing to answer the call of duty and accomplish great things for the benefit of our fellow man.

In the Office

This week, LouAnn Kibbee of Hays, Chris and Dan Owens of Hutchinson, Sidney Gray-Hayes and Susan Sincock of Salina were in on behalf of the Statewide Independent Living Council of Kansas to talk about the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and funding for independent living centers and housing.

Members of the Kansas Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Program, including Gloria Wight and Tesa Rijkfogel of Garden City; Mickey Edwards and Carolynn Davidson of Emporia; Carol Miller, Judy Womack, Cathy Feriend and Shirley Stolzenburg of Concordia; and Colette Flaharty of Fowler were in to discuss funding for the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

The National Cattleman's Beef Association President, Jan Lyons of Manhattan, Kevin Schultz of Haviland, Mike Jacobson of Ulysses, Ronald Shortridge of Satanta, David Haresnape of

Oberlin and John Bury of Applebee's Restaurants in Overland Park were in the office on behalf of the National Cattleman's Beef Association to discuss beef production in Kansas.

In for a tour of the Capitol this week were Claude and Lori Scheibe of Summerfield, and their children, Andrea and Jared, as were Ned and Dorothy Lowry of Liberal.

Very truly yours,

Jerry